

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (currently amended) A middle ear prosthesis comprising:

2 a piston adapted to extend through an oval window when implanted in a human ear;

a pair of jaws for engaging an ossicle when implanted in a human ear;

4 a spring coupled to the jaws for biasing the jaws toward one another to provide

clamping pressure, wherein the spring is integrally formed between the pair of jaws and is of a

6 flexible material different from a material of the jaws; and

means for operatively connecting the jaws to the piston comprising a wire operatively

8 connected to one of the jaws and to the piston.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein each of the jaws

2 comprises a body having a semi-cylindrical inner surface.

5. (currently amended) The middle ear prosthesis of claim [[4]] 1 wherein the spring

2 ~~comprises a pair of flexible support arms each operatively coupled to an associated one of the jaws~~  
is of silicon.

6. (currently amended) The middle ear prosthesis of claim [[5]] 1 wherein ~~each~~  
2 ~~support arm has one end received in an opening in the associated jaw and another end coupled to the~~  
~~piston~~ the spring is of pliable plastic.

7. (currently amended) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein ~~each support~~  
2 ~~arm has one end surrounding the body of the associated jaw and another end coupled to the piston~~  
the spring is integrally formed between the pair of jaws to define a C-shaped attachment mechanism.

8. (canceled)

9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended) The middle ear prosthesis of claim [[9]] 1 further  
2 comprising a second wire connected to the other jaw so that the wires can be squeezed together to  
open the jaws.

11. (canceled)

12. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the spring is of a  
2 biocompatible material.

13. (canceled)

14. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the piston is of a  
2 biocompatible material.

15. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the piston is of a material  
2 selected from titanium or PTFE.

16. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the jaws are of a  
2 bioactive material.

17. (original) The middle ear prosthesis of claim 1 wherein the jaws are of  
2 hydroxylapatite.

Claims 18 - 26 (canceled).

27. (original) A self crimping ossicular prosthesis comprising:

- 2 a piston adapted to extend through an oval window when implanted in a human ear;
- 4 a pair of jaws of a bioactive material each comprising a body having a semi-cylindrical inner surface for engaging opposite sides of an ossicle when implanted in a human ear, to anchor to the ossicle;
- 6 a spring element of a flexible material, different from the pair of jaws, integrally coupled to the jaws for biasing the jaws toward one another to provide clamping pressure; and
- 8 a support arm operatively coupled to one of the jaws and to the piston.

28. (original) The self crimping ossicular prosthesis of claim 27 wherein the jaws are spaced apart with the semi-cylindrical inner surfaces facing one another, and the spring element is connected between the pair of bodies to define a substantially "C" shaped attachment mechanism.

29. (original) The self crimping ossicular prosthesis of claim 27 further comprising a second arm connected to the other jaw so that the arms can be squeezed together to open the jaws.

Claims 30 - 33 (canceled).